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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SOURCE Izgrev.BRUSHLEN IRRIGATION SYSTEM BEGINS TO OPERATE

On 27 April 1951, the extraordinary irrigation system in the Brushlen low-land near Ruse was put into operation. This large installation will irrigate 175 square kilometers of arable land. Fifteen villages will benefit from the new irrigation system.

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Under the direction of two Soviet water-conservation specialists, Shubladze and Michayev and with the assistance of the USSR, the Brushlen system, the largest irrigation system in Bulgaria, was built in less than 2 years. This vast project entailed the excavation of over 2 million cubic meters of earth, the construction of 1,200 kilometers of canals, and the installation of powerful pumping stations, mobile irrigation pumping units, distribution canals, etc.

Two of the high-powered pumping stations have been mounted on tugs which float near the bank of the Danube; thus the pumps rise and fall with the level of the water. The two stations are equipped with a total of 11 pumps, which together draw 9 cubic meters of water per second from the river. The first pumping station will raise the water to a height of 10 meters, and it will flow through long, heavy iron pipes into an enormous basin. From this basin a series of secondary canals will direct some of the water toward the lowlands near the Danube itself, but most of the water will be sent through the main canal to the Brushlen pumping station, where high-powered installations will raise the water an additional 20 meters. From here, through another canal, the water diverted from the Danube will reach the main pumping station, raising it an additional 52 meters. After reaching the main pumping station, the water diverted for irrigation will have been elevated to a height 82 meters above the level of the river.

The water will be distributed through a large number of main canals and will pass numerous water divides, bridges, gullies, and other installations. This water will eventually reach the secondary canals, which will perform the actual irrigation. The enormous canal network passes through rugged areas. In the case of hills, siphons draw the water up as much as 30 meters. The total length of the siphons is about 4.5 kilometers. One canal even passes under a whole village at a depth of 10 meters.

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In the future cotton, corn, wheat, and rice will be planted in the Brushlen lowland. The rice fields will yield 400 to 500 kilograms of rice per decare. The lowland will also have vineyards, orchards, and vegetable gardens, in which strawberries will be grown.

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